STRESS, EMOTIONAL MATURITY AND PERSONALITY OF PARENTS OF DISABLED CHILDREN

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SYNOPSIS SUBMITTED TO THE ANDHRA UNIVERSITY, VISAKHAPATNAM FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN PSYCHOLOGY

2013

Disability in a child provokes a series of disequilibrium among the parents in their psychological aspects which directly or indirectly affect them in various social and psychological well beings. Parent shows a series of reactions after knowing that their child is disabled and they start showing the guilt, sorrow, denial, anger, which affects different parents differently, so that these sort of stressors leads the parents to physical and mental health Problem.

When a child is diagnosed with disability, all the attention focused on helping the child. But parents also need assistance in coping with stress, maturity with their emotions and also positive personality approaches are required to them. Parents of children with disabilities have very high level of parenting stress signifying that they perceived for more stress in their role as parents than did parents of children without disabilities, many studies highlighted the same aspects in their findings.

Approximately 3 to 5 percentage of the population of children experience or get affected with physical, intellectual and mental health problems according to the National Health Survey in India and other Western countries. Stress and Emotional problems like depression are more common among the parents of children with disabilities which indirectly impose a significant burden on the society (Elgar et al, 2003, 2004). Depressive symptoms, stress and emotional pressure have been cited as having the highest disease burden of all health conditions in parents, impairing social and physical functioning and being associated with suicide, parental separation, divorce problems, increased health

care costs, morbidity, crime rate increase, and mortality (World Health Organization, 2001).

Disability in India

Over the last fifty years, right to education has evolved in India inspired by a host of factors including judicial interpretations, enactment of special laws and amendment to the constitution. The constitution of India has made education a fundamental right for all children including the children with disabilities in the age group of 6-14 years. Section 26 of Persons with Disabilities Act (1995) affirms the capacity of Indian State to afford free education beyond 14 years of age, particularly in the context of children with disabilities.

According to the Census 2001, there are 2.19 crores people with disabilities in India who constitute 2.13 per cent of the total population. This includes persons with visual, hearing, speech, loco motor and mental disabilities. Seventy five per cent of persons with disabilities live in rural areas, 49 per cent of disabled population is literate and only 34 per cent are employed. The earlier emphasis on medical rehabilitation has now been replaced by an emphasis on social rehabilitation.

In India different definitions of disability conditions have been introduced for various purposes, essentially following the medical model, as such, they have been based on various criteria of ascertaining abnormality or pathologic conditions of persons. In absence of a conceptual framework based on the social model in the Indian context, no standardization for evaluating disability across methods has been

achieved. In common parlance, different terms such as disabled, handicapped, crippled, physically challenged, are used inter-changeably, indicating noticeably the emphasis on pathologic conditions.

Persons with Disability Act, 1995

Through the Act is built upon the premise of equal opportunity, protection of rights and full participation, it provides definitions of disabled person by following the medical model. According to the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, "Person with disability" means a person suffering from not less than (40%) forty percent of any disability as certified by a medical authority (any hospital or institution, specified for the purposes of this Act by notification by the appropriate Government). As per the act "Various types of Disability" are, (i) Blindness; (ii) Low vision; (iii) Leprosy-cured; (iv) Hearing impairment; (v) Loco motor disability; (vi) Mental retardation; (vii) Mental illness, which were defined as below.

Objectives

1. To find out the stress among parents of disabled children with demographic variables.
2. To find out the emotional maturity among parents of disabled children with demographic variables.
3. To find out the personality among parents of disabled children with demographic variables.
4. To find out the relationship among the Stress, Emotional Maturity and Personality among parents of disabled children.

Sample

The researcher used the “Stratified random sampling” technique for collection of data. The sample of 400 is from 200 families of parents of disabled children randomly selected from 10 special schools in Union Territory of Puducherry. The sample includes 200 fathers and 200 mothers from selected group of disabled children. The details of sample are given below. Three standardized tools were used for the present study. They are

Tools

1) Stress Questionnaire constructed by Latha Satish (1997)

2) Emotional Maturity Scale developed by Yashvir Singh and Mahesh Bhargava (2005)

3) The Maudsley Personality Inventory constructed by Eysenck, H.J. (1959).

The present study has used the following demographical variables, they are parental gender, parental age, parental qualifications, parental occupation, annual income of the family, marriage type, type of family, category of disabled children and the age of disabled children.

Findings of the Study

Stress

- Significant differences were found for some dimensions. Between fathers and mothers on mild stress, moderate stress, severe stress and total stress. Mothers experience severe stress due to their disabled children.

- Significant differences were found between parental age i.e. below 30 yrs and above 30 yrs on mild stress, moderate stress, severe stress and total stress. Below 30 yrs aged parents experience severe stress due to their disabled children.

- Significant differences were found between fathers and mothers on their interaction of age i.e. below 30 yrs and above 30 yrs on mild stress, moderate stress, severe stress and total stress. Below 30 yrs both fathers and mothers were experience severe stress due to their disabled children.

- Significant differences were found between parental qualifications i.e. below 10^{th} class, below 12^{th} class, graduate and post graduate on mild stress, moderate stress, severe stress and total stress. Below 10^{th} class parents experience severe and total stress due to their disabled children.

- Significant differences were found between parental occupations i.e. government, private, self employed and unemployed on mild stress, moderate stress, severe stress and total stress. Un-

employed parents experience severe and total stress due to their disabled children.

- Significant differences were found between parental annual income i.e. BPL, up to 2 lakhs, 2 to 4 lakhs and above 4 lakhs on mild stress, moderate stress, severe stress and total stress. Below poverty line parents experience severe and total stress due to their disabled children.

- Significant differences were found between parental marriage type i.e. consanguineous and non-consanguineous on moderate stress and total stress. Consanguineous parents experience moderate and total stress due to their disabled children.

- Significant differences were found between fathers and mothers on their interaction of parental marriage type i.e. consanguineous and non-consanguineous on mild stress, moderate stress, severe stress and total stress. Both consanguineous fathers and mothers were experience severe stress and total stress due to their disabled children.

- Significant difference was found between parental type of family i.e. joint family and nuclear family on moderate stress. Nuclear family parents experience moderate stress due to their disabled children.

- Significant differences were found between fathers and mothers on their interaction of parental type of family i.e. joint family and

nuclear family on mild stress, moderate stress, severe stress and total stress. Both nuclear family fathers and mothers were experience severe stress and total stress due to their disabled children.

- Significant difference was found between disability of child i.e. loco motor disability, hearing impaired, visually impaired and mental retardation on severe stress. All parents of disabled children experience severe stress but, parents of children with mental retardation experience higher severe stress.

- Significant difference was found between disabled child age i.e. below 5 Yrs, 6 to 10 yrs and 11 to 14 yrs on mild stress, moderate stress, severe stress and total stress. Parents of children with below 5 yrs age experience severe and total stress.

Emotional maturity

- Significant differences were found between fathers and mothers on emotional stability, emotional progression, social adjustment, personality integration, independence and total emotional maturity dimensions. Fathers experience unstable and mothers experience extremely unstable due to their disabled children.

- Significant differences were found between parental age i.e. below 30 yrs and above 30 yrs on social adjustment, personality integration, independence and total emotional maturity dimensions. Above 30 yrs parents experience unstable and below

30 yrs aged parents experience extremely unstable due to their disabled children.

- Significant differences were found between fathers and mothers on their interaction of age i.e. below 30 yrs and above 30 yrs on emotional stability, emotional progression, social adjustment, personality integration, independence and total emotional maturity dimensions. Below 30 yrs fathers are unstable and mothers of both age groups were experience extremely unstable due to their disabled children.

- Significant differences were found between parental qualifications i.e. below 10^{th} class, below 12^{th} class, graduate and post graduate on emotional stability, emotional progression, social adjustment, personality integration, independence and total emotional maturity dimensions. Below 10^{th} class and 12^{th} class parents experience extremely unstable, graduate parents experience unstable and post graduate parents experience moderately stable due to their disabled children.

- Significant differences were found between parental occupations i.e. government, private, self employed and unemployed on emotional stability, emotional progression, social adjustment, personality integration, independence and total emotional maturity dimensions. Only government job parents experience extremely stable and private, self employed and unemployed parents experience extremely unstable due to their disabled children.

- Significant differences were found between parental annual income i.e. BPL, up to 2 lakhs, 2 to 4 lakhs and above 4 lakhs on emotional stability, emotional progression, social adjustment, personality integration, independence and total emotional maturity dimensions. Below poverty line parents and up to 2 lakhs earning parents experience extremely unstable and 2 to 4 lakhs and above 4 lakhs groups experience unstable due to their disabled children.

- Significant difference was found between parental marriage type i.e. consanguineous and non-consanguineous only on independence dimension. Consanguineous parents experience higher independence rather than non-consanguineous parents.

- Significant differences were found between fathers and mothers on their interaction of parental marriage type i.e. consanguineous and non-consanguineous on emotional stability, emotional progression, social adjustment, personality integration, independence and total emotional maturity dimensions. Both consanguineous and non-consanguineous fathers experience unstable and both consanguineous and non-consanguineous mothers were experience extremely unstable due to their disabled children.

- Significant differences were not found between parental type of family i.e. joint family and nuclear family on emotional stability, emotional progression, social adjustment, personality integration, independence and total emotional maturity dimensions. So both

joint and nuclear family parents experience equally unstable due to their disabled children.

- Significant differences were found between fathers and mothers on their interaction of parental type of family i.e. joint family and nuclear family on emotional stability, emotional progression, social adjustment, personality integration, independence and total emotional maturity dimensions. Both joint and nuclear family fathers experience unstable and both joint and nuclear family mothers were experience extremely unstable due to their disabled children.

- Significant difference was found between disability of child i.e. loco motor disability, hearing impaired, visually impaired and mental retardation on emotional progression, social adjustment, personality integration, independence and total emotional maturity dimensions. All parents of disabled children experience unstable but, parents of children with mental retardation experience extremely unstable.

- Significant difference was found between disabled child age i.e. below 5 yrs, 6 to 10 yrs and 11 to 14 yrs on social adjustment, personality integration, independence and total emotional maturity dimensions. Parents of children with below 11 to 14 yrs age experience unstable. Parents of children with below 5 yrs age and 6 to 10 yrs age experience extremely unstable.

Personality

- Significant difference was found between fathers and mothers on neuroticism. Both fathers and mothers of disabled children need attention for modifying their behavior.

- Significant differences were not found between parental age i.e. below 30 yrs and above 30 yrs on neuroticism and extraversion.

- Significant difference was found between fathers and mothers on their interaction of age i.e. below 30 yrs and above 30 yrs on neuroticism. Fathers and mothers in both age groups need attention for modifying their behavior.

- Significant differences were not found between parental qualifications i.e. below 10^{th} class, below 12^{th} class, graduate and post graduate on neuroticism and extraversion.

- Significant difference was found between parental occupations i.e. government, private, self employed and unemployed on neuroticism. All groups of parents of disabled children need attention for modifying their behavior.

- Significant differences were not found between parental annual income i.e. BPL, up to 2 lakhs, 2 to 4 lakhs and above 4 lakhs on neuroticism and extraversion.

- Significant difference was found between parental marriage type i.e. consanguineous and non-consanguineous on neuroticism.

Consanguineous and non-consanguineous parents of disabled children need attention for modifying their behavior.

- Significant difference was found between fathers and mothers on their interaction of parental marriage type i.e. consanguineous and non-consanguineous on neuroticism. Both consanguineous and non-consanguineous fathers and mothers of disabled children need attention for modifying their behavior.

- Significant differences were not found between parental type of family i.e. joint family and nuclear family on neuroticism and extraversion.

- Significant difference was found between fathers and mothers on their interaction of parental type of family i.e. joint family and nuclear family on neuroticism. Both joint and nuclear family fathers and mothers of disabled children need attention for modifying their behavior.

- Significant difference was found between disability of child i.e. loco motor disability, hearing impaired, visually impaired and mental retardation on neuroticism and extraversion. All groups of parents of disabled children need attention for modifying their behavior.

- Significant difference was found between disabled child age i.e. below 5 Yrs, 6 to 10 yrs and 11 to 14 yrs on neuroticism. Parents of children with all age groups need attention for modifying their behavior.

- The inter correlations between stress, emotional maturity and neuroticism of parents were positively related but, extraversion was not significant for some dimensions and negatively correlated.

Conclusions

The objective of the present study that to find out the Stress, Emotional Maturity and Personality of Parents of disabled children. The findings observed that significant difference was found between fathers and mothers on stress, emotional maturity and neuroticism. Mothers experience severe stress due to their disabled children. Fathers were unstable and mothers experience extremely unstable on their emotional maturity. Significant difference was found between disability of child i.e. loco motor disability, hearing impaired, visually impaired and mental retardation on severe stress, emotional progression, social adjustment, personality integration, independence and overall emotional maturity and personality traits. Both fathers and mothers of disabled children need attention for modifying their behavior.

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